

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. An identifier indicating the status of each claim is provided.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A communication contents certification system for certifying contents of an electronic mail communicated between two or more party communication terminals and two or more attorney communication terminals through a network, the communication contents certification system comprising:

a communication contents certification apparatus having communication contents receiving means for receiving said electronic mail, communication contents storage means for storing the contents of said electronic mail, communication contents transmission means for transmitting said electronic mail, and charging means for charging a fee associated with use of the communication contents certification apparatus;

a first party communication terminal coupled to the communication contents certification apparatus;

a second party communication terminal coupled to the communication contents certification apparatus;

a first attorney communication terminal coupled to the communication contents certification apparatus; and

a second attorney communication terminal coupled to the communication contents certification apparatus,

wherein the electronic mail is transmitted from a party communication terminal to at least one of an attorney communication terminal and another of the party communication terminals such that the electronic mail is routed to the communication contents certification apparatus and the communication contents certification apparatus obtains authentication information for the electronic mail, which comprises an identification and a password of a party sending the electronic mail, and stores the contents of the electronic mail, and the contents certification apparatus authenticates the electronic mail based on the identification and the password of the party sending the electronic mail,

wherein a reply message in response to a received electronic mail transmission is prepared with reference to a comment provided from one of said two or more attorney communication terminals,

wherein the charging means perform charge processing to charge at least one of the parties for at least one of authenticating and certifying the contents of the electronic mail, [[and]]

wherein the communication contents storage means stores the communication history of the electronic mail[.], and

wherein a contract is formed between the first party and the second party for using the communication contents certification system, via the contents certification system, prior to transmitting a certified transmission.

2. (Previously Presented) The communication contents certification system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first party communication terminal includes a GUI (Graphic User Interface) having a party button display section for selecting electronic mail communication

with the second party communication terminal and an attorney button display section for selecting electronic mail communication with the first attorney communication terminal, wherein the first party communication terminal is adapted to transmit the electronic mail as a function of input to the GUI.

3. (Previously Presented) The communication contents certification system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the contents of the electronic mail relate to a contract matter between the first party and the second party.

4. (Previously Presented) The communication contents certification system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the first and second party communication terminals are adapted to transmit reception confirmation information indicating reception of the electronic mail, and the communication contents receiving means receives the reception confirmation information transmitted from the first and second communication terminals, and the communication contents storage means stores the reception confirmation information.

5. (Previously Presented) The communication contents certification system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the electronic mail is encrypted.

6. (Previously Presented) The communication contents certification system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the communication contents certification apparatus further

comprises party identification means for identifying a party using the party communication terminal from which the electronic mail was transmitted.

7. (Currently Amended) A communication contents certification method for certifying contents of an electronic mail communicated between two or more party communication terminals and two or more attorney communication terminals through a network comprising:

transmitting the electronic mail from a party communication terminal to at least one of an attorney communication terminal and another of the party communication terminals such that the electronic mail is routed through a communication contents certification apparatus, that authenticates the electronic mail based on an identification and a password of a party sending the electronic mail and stores the electronic mail;

a reply message in response to a received electronic mail transmission is prepared with reference to a comment provided from one of said two or more attorney communication terminals;

charging at least one of the parties for at least one of authenticating and the certifying contents of the electronic mail; [[and]]

storing the communication history of the electronic mail [[.]]; and

wherein a contract is formed between the first party and the second party for using the communication contents certification system, via the contents certification system, prior to transmitting a certified transmission.

8. (Previously Presented) The communication contents certification method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the contents of the electronic mail relate to information concerning a contract matter between a first party and a second party.

9. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable information recording medium that is adapted to store a computer program comprising:

program code for transmitting electronic mail from a party communication terminal to at least one of an attorney communication terminal and another party communication terminal, such that the electronic mail is routed through a communication contents certification apparatus, that authenticates the electronic mail based on an identification and a password of a party sending the electronic mail and stores the electronic mail;

program code for forming a contract between a first party and a second party for using the communication contents certification system, via the contents certification system, prior to transmitting a certified transmission;

program code for preparing a reply message in response to a received electronic mail transmission with reference to a comment provided from one of two or more attorney communication terminals;

program code for charging at least one of the parties for at least one of authenticating and the certifying contents of the electronic mail; and

program code for storing the communication history of the electronic mail.